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Alabama Conference Historical Society  
METHODIST EPISCOPAL CHURCH, SOUTH

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# The Methodist Churches of Montgomery



Souvenir Program for the Celebration of the One Hundredth Anniversary of the Official Planting of the Methodist Church within the bounds of what is now Alabama. 1808-1908

**Court Street Church**

Montgomery

Sunday 11 o'clock a. m., February 9, 1908

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PARAGON PRESS  
1908.

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Compiled by Thomas M. Owen

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## Alabama Conference Historical Society

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*Active Vice President*, W. F. Vandiver, Montgomery.

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Rev. Charles H. Motley, Birmingham.

Rev. E. L. Crawford, Union Springs.

Rev. Frank Seay, Mobile.

Rev. J. M. Dannelly, Montgomery.

J. A. Wilkinson, Montgomery.

Judge Wm. H. Thomas, Montgomery.

### Objects

The objects and purposes of the organization are the collection and preservation of the materials for the history of the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, in the bounds of the Alabama Conference. While these are its objects and purposes in a restricted and intensive sense, all Methodist history is regarded as in the scope of the work of the Society.

### Invitation to Membership

All ministers of the Alabama Conference are eligible to enrollment on application, and are exempt from dues.

Other persons, interested in promoting the work of the Society, are invited to join. Dues, \$1.00 per annum.



## Program 100th Anniversary

### Order of Exercises

PRELUDE—Serenade, Orchestra ..... *Titl*

ANTHEM—Gloria, from Twelfth Mass.....*Mozart*

HYMN—Coronation. No. 180. Reading by Rev. R. R. Ellison, pastor, Forest Avenue Church.

PRAYER. Rev. J. M. Dannelly, agent Woman's College.

ANTHEM—They Shall Not Hunger Nor Thirst....*Woodman*  
Solo by Mr. Van Pelt.

WELCOME TO COURT STREET CHURCH. Rev. Oliver C. McGehee, D. D., pastor.

SCRIPTURE LESSONS: (1) Ecclesiastes, ix; (2) II Timothy, iv, 1-8.

Rev. Wm. M. Cox, pastor, Dexter Avenue Church.

Rev. Wm. M. Curtis, pastor, Perry Street Church.

HYMN—How Firm a Foundation. No. 461. Reading by Rev. D. H. McNeal, pastor, Clayton Street Church.

OFFERTORY—Anthem—Emanuel ..... *Gilchrist*  
Solos by Miss Millsbaugh and Miss Nabors.

THE 100TH ANNIVERSARY of the official planting of Methodism within the bounds of what is now Alabama.  
Rev. Charles H. Motley, president, Alabama Conference Historical Society, M. E. Church, South.

### GREETINGS FROM OTHER ORGANIZATIONS.

*Baptist.*—Judge J. R. Tyson, First Baptist Church.

*Episcopal.*—Dr. B. J. Baldwin, St. John's Church.

*Presbyterian.*—Mr. Frank P. Glass, First Presbyterian Church.

*Alabama Baptist Historical Society.*—Prof. H. J. Willingham.

Annivers

175

THE ALABAMA CONFERENCE, 1851. Rev. J. W. Shores, superannuate, the oldest preacher on the rolls of the Conference.

HYMN—I Love Thy Kingdom Lord. No. 208.

ADDRESS—The Old Time Circuit Rider. Rev. John Andrew Rice, pastor, Rhayne Memorial Church, New Orleans.

DOXOLOGY.

BENEDICTION. Rev. P. M. Guthrie, pastor, Fifth Avenue Church.

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#### Montgomery Methodist Preachers

PRESIDING ELDER, MONTGOMERY DISTRICT. Rev. M. H. Holt.

COURT STREET CHURCH.—Dr. O. C. McGehee.

DEXTER AVENUE CHURCH.—Rev. Wm. M. Cox.

CLAYTON STREET CHURCH.—Rev. D. H. McNeal.

PERRY STREET CHURCH.—Rev. Wm. M. Curtis.

FIFTH AVENUE CHURCH.—Rev. P. M. Guthrie.

FOREST AVENUE CHURCH.—Rev. R. R. Ellison.

AGENT WOMAN'S COLLEGE.—Rev. J. M. Dannelly.

AGENT METHODIST ORPHANAGE.—Rev. T. H. Jones.

#### Court Street Church Choir

Miss Elizabeth Millspaugh, *Soprano*.

Miss Mary Hewell Nabors, *Contralto*.

Mr. F. H. Logan, Mr. Aldrich Moore, *Tenors*

Mr. Wm. L. Van Pelt, *Bass*.

Miss Katie Booth, *Organist*.

#### Orchestra

Mr. F. E. Williams, *Violin*.

Mr. Ralph Lindner, *Flute*.

Mr. J. W. Spears, *Cornet*.

Mr. F. Miller, *Double Bass*.

## Sketch of Montgomery Methodist Churches

### COURT STREET CHURCH

"The first effective movement," according to Matthew P. Blue, the annalist and historian of the city, "in the direction of a church building in the city of Montgomery, was made by Dr. Moses Andrew, a local Methodist preacher, and William Sayre, an elder of the Presbyterian Church." There had been occasional preaching in the then frontier town from its beginning, but no concerted action until these two men, in the spring of 1823, brought together the religious influences of the community in a union effort. This resulted in an appeal for subscriptions, and an organization for the erection of a building. The agents of the Alabama Company gave permission for the use of lot 1, square 20, for the site. This is the location of the present Court Street Church.

Work on the building, forty-eight feet long and twenty-four feet wide, was begun late in 1823, but it was not completed until during 1825. The church was used for union services, and sometimes as a school house until 1830, when it came into the possession of the Methodists.

The further early history is best told by Mr. Blue, and his account will be used in full: "Rev. James King, who was still living in 1867, at the advanced age of eighty-seven years, was the first Methodist preacher who visited Montgomery. Mrs. Flora Mills and family, Methodists from North Carolina, prevailed upon him to sojourn in the town during the spring and summer of 1819. He preached frequently in and around the town during his stay, greatly to the joy of the few Methodists. There were no regular appointments in this place by and for the circuit preachers until the summer and fall of 1829. The nearest preaching place was two miles out of town, at the Mills and Westcott meeting house. The society formed there in 1821 (was the first formal Methodist society organized in this vicinity) and was composed chiefly of the families of Thomas Hatchett, David Westcott, Thomas Nichols, Mrs. Flora Mills, and Mrs. John G. Ashley, and their connection, plain old fashioned Methodists. The Methodists in the town were in the habit of repairing to this plain, unpretending sanctuary to attend class meeting and listen to the preaching of circuit riders. In August, 1821, the Rev. James H. Mellard visited this part of the circuit in his regular rounds and preached in the court house. . . . . In January, 1822, Bishop

Enoch George of the Methodist Episcopal Church, while en route to preside at the Mississippi Conference, was induced to remain over and preach in the court house. His was the first visit of a high church dignitary, and the whole town came out to hear the word of eternal life.

"Prior to 1832, Middle and South Alabama were included in and formed a part of the Mississippi Conference of the Methodist Episcopal Church. Montgomery was embraced within the limits of the Cahaba Circuit. No effort had been made to organize a society within the corporate limits of the town according to the rules prescribed by the Discipline of the Church, until the summer of 1829. At that period, the Rev. James H. Mellard, preacher in charge of the Circuit, invited the members that had worshiped at the Mills and Westcott Meeting House since 1821, to form a closer union with the few members who were then living in the town. Heretofore, those country members had been loth to unite with those in town. Hence their refusal to accept the proposition of the majority of the subscribers to finish the Union Church, for their own special benefit. When they did unite, it was more from necessity than choice. The Mills and Westcott Meeting House went to decay in 1828, and a new church had to be built or those members unite with the town Methodists and accept the use of the Union Church for that purpose. . . . .

"The invitation of Rev. Mr. Mellard for a closer union having been accepted, a new society was organized in the church built in the town for all denominations. This was on the 15th day of September, 1829, and was composed of the following members, to-wit: Thomas Hatchett, Rachel Hatchett, Eliza Westcott, Susannah Nichols, Susannah Murrell, Cecilia Williamson, Eliza P. Blue, Mrs. S. Fields (wife of Zachariah Fields), Mary T. Clopton, and Miss Lavinia Brothers. Soon after this organization, Mr. Hatchett obtained a long list of names to a petition setting forth the advantages which would accrue to the cause of religion by constituting the church at Montgomery a permanent station instead of a two weeks appointment in the Circuit. This petition, addressed to the Bishop and members of the Mississippi Conference, was promptly responded to by the appointment of the Rev. Benjamin A. Haughton as preacher in charge. He arrived in December, 1829, and entered at once upon his pastoral duties. It will thus appear manifest that the small society which the Rev. Mr. Mellard organized in September, 1829, was, in less than one hundred days, transferred from the Circuit and incorporated into the church of the Montgomery Station. . . . .

"This society worshiped in the Union Church building



for over five years. A part of that period, the members were at a disadvantage in procuring the use of the church. The friends of Methodism committed a grave error in rejecting the proposition of a majority of the original subscribers to the Union Church building. These subscribers had proposed long prior to 1829, to relinquish to the Methodist Episcopal Church the aforesaid building (then incomplete) to be used by them for a place of worship on condition that said church would finish the building 'in a plain and decent manner.' If they had accepted the proposition when it was made, it would have given them entire control of the church and its preaching appointments. Failing to do so, the consequence was that the Baptists and Presbyterians seized the favorable opportunity neglected by the Methodists, and took possession of the house. With a renewed subscription, those denominations raised about two hundred and fifty dollars, by which means they fitted up the building in a plain manner, with pulpit and seats, together with such repairs as were needed for the windows. They next supplied the pulpit with their preachers. The friends of Rev. Fields Bradshaw, the Baptist minister, engaged in services for two Sabbaths in each month, during the year 1829, and the first half of 1830. The Presbyterians claimed one Sabbath each month for their regular preaching appointment for ministers of their order, and put in a contingent claim for another Sabbath in each month for agents of the Missionary, Bible and Tract Societies, which, at that time, were mostly of the Presbyterian Church. It will thus be seen that there was but little room for Methodist ministers to occupy the church, at least on the Sabbath. A fifth Sunday or the failure of a Baptist or Presbyterian preacher to be present, afforded the only opportunity for preaching by them.

"Such was the State of affairs when the Rev. Mr. Haughton arrived, and took charge of the Methodist Society. During the first quarter of 1830, he had but few opportunities afforded for preaching to his people in the church. His opportunities were more frequent during the second and third quarters of that year. But not, however, until the fourth or last quarter, did he get full possession of that house of worship. In consequence of so many hindrances, he did not succeed in adding many members to the church. He was not a talented man, but a deeply pious and zealous minister, greatly beloved by the few members of the society. The first invitation he gave for persons to join the church, after he had taken charge of the Station, was on Sunday, April 11, 1830. Then Neil Blue, Zachariah Fields, and Harriet Amanda Blue (not

quite eleven years old), joined on probation. Others during that year, united by letter and on probation, among whom were, William Y. Higgins, Willis Higgins, Catharine Higgins, Hardy Herbert, R. H. Dart, Ann Spencer, Robert Parker, Catharine Parker (the two latter formerly members of the Wesleyan Church, in London), Richard Morgan, and Charles G. Rush.

"After the completion of the first theatre in the town, the Methodists made an unsuccessful effort to purchase that building for church purposes. This proposition aroused the opposition of one at least of the stockholders so much that he threatened to defeat the Methodists in purchasing the lot on which then stood the Union Church, the present location of the First (Court Street) Methodist Church. On March 21st and 22nd, 1832, the 'Alabama Company,' whose part of the town was west of Court Street, closed out at auction their remaining unsold lots, including the church lot referred to. Some of the Methodists attended the sale, with great misgivings as to their ability to purchase the coveted, and to them sacred ground. They knew the comparative poverty of the membership, and the wealth of their theatre opponent and competitor. The lot was offered, and sure enough the bids soon went beyond their means. Their hearts, of course, were depressed at the thought of having to relinquish all hope of securing the premises sacred to them by so many dear associations. It was finally knocked down to Gen. John Scott, for five hundred dollars. Although not succeeding in their own bids, they were rejoiced to know that it was not the property of the one who had vaunted his boasts against them. Little did they on that occasion think of the fast friend they had under the Providence of God, in that good man, General Scott. Unexpectedly to them, that lot and appurtenances were, on the 9th of May, 1832, deeded to them forever as a church lot. At the instance of the purchaser, who was a member of the company, the 'Alabama Company,' made a present of those premises to the Methodist Church, the deed for which is recorded in the Probate Office of this County, Book E, page 448. God, who had provided a sacrifice in the bushes in the place of Isaac, whom the father of the faithful had bound upon the rude altar, had also provided means to thwart the evil designs of that enemy of Methodism in our town. General Scott had heard of the aforementioned threat, and knowing the impecunious condition of the few Methodists here, and considering them his people, he went to the sale resolved to take their part against that son of Belial. The Methodist Church in Montgomery has always held in grateful remembrance, this act of dis-

interested liberality and beneficence on his part. Their prayers in his behalf were frequent, and doubtless answered in his continued prosperity until his death, November 25, 1839. Mrs. Scott, his estimable lady, was a Methodist, and one of her sons afterwards entered the ministry, while others of the family cast their lots with the Methodists.

"The titles to this property being thus secured beyond peradventure, and the house finished, it would be but rational to suppose that the Methodists could now enter upon a season of rest, free from any disturbing elements from within or without. Such, however, was not their happy condition. It was soon discovered that the house was too small to accommodate the congregation which desired to worship there. At the quarterly and other grand meetings of the church, many had to return from the house for the want of seats. This necessitated the building of a larger church, and then their troubles commenced. The membership was poor, and besides, the Presbyterians and Baptists had exhausted all the available funds that could be begged or borrowed in the community, in building their new houses of worship. This latter threw the Methodists upon their resources, which at that time were very limited. With all these discouraging circumstances confronting them, they never hesitated, but went boldly forward in the undertaking, trusting to the Lord to prosper them in the good work. They first obtained a subscription of eight hundred dollars in money and materials, and through the influence of good friends they got the promise of a loan of one thousand dollars from J. B. Leavins, of Mobile. Mr. Leavins was kind enough to extend said loan for two years, at the end of which time accommodation for the same amount was obtained from the branch of the Bank of the State of Alabama, at Montgomery. This bank accommodation was extended for three years. With these means they felt justified in going forward with the work. In March, 1834, the contract for a new and more commodious church edifice was closed with Messrs. Wiley Blount and Charles Black, who completed it the next spring. The old structure, formerly the Union Church, was sold to Mr. Neil Blue, who removed it to the lot in the rear of the present location of the Methodist parsonage. The building of the new church dragged along and continued to prove a severe test of the ability of the members, a majority of whom were poor in this world's goods. At one time it seemed almost impossible to save it from sale by the contractors. Mr. Neil Blue, however, threw himself into the breach, and relieved the debt at great risk. This new

edifice was a framed building sixty feet long and forty-five broad, with a gallery at one end and on two sides, within. This gallery was usually occupied by the colored people when the services were for the whites. This church was dedicated on Sunday, March 1st, 1835, the Rev. Henry W. Hilliard, preacher in charge, preaching the dedicatory sermon. On that occasion the house was crowded to its utmost capacity, and the sermon was one of the ablest, most eloquent and appropriate ever delivered by that distinguished divine. This edifice served as a pleasant place of worship until 1853, when it was taken down to make way for the present large brick church. The colored members of the church re-erected the materials upon Holcombe Street, upon the present location of the Clinton Chapel, which they used for their religious services. The Methodists were worshipping in that wooden structure during the remarkable revivals of 1839 and 1845, which added so many persons to all of the Christian Churches of Montgomery. In that building hundreds upon hundreds found peace with God, who still are bright and shining lights, while hundreds of others who dedicated themselves to the service of their Master in that house, have gone from the Church Militant to the Church Triumphant. Many were the occasions, while occupying that edifice, that God's spirit was manifested in a peculiar manner. What pleasant associations cluster around the memory of that church in the minds of the present membership.

"The present (1878) massive church building was commenced in 1853, and in two years was sufficiently advanced to admit of being used. The architect was Mr. C. C. Ordeman, and the contractor Mr. B. F. Randolph. The dedication took place on Sunday, March 3rd, 1856, twenty-one years after the other building was consecrated to the service of Almighty God. Bishop George F. Pierce preached the dedicatory sermon, from 1st Corinthians, chapter 1, verses 23 and 24. The church on that occasion was filled to overflowing—seats, aisles, galleries and doors were thronged with an attentive congregation. The Bishop never preached with more freedom or with a higher appreciation by his audience. The hearts and purses of the congregation were fully opened to the appeal for help towards paying off the remaining debt due for its construction. The cost of the church was about \$25,000, all of which has long since been paid. The building was a plain, unpretending structure, which in outward appearance is not very attractive. It is now an elegant building, the most imposing in the city. In the extent of accommodations for a congregation, it exceeds any other

church in the city, for it is calculated to seat about two thousand persons."

At the time of the dedication in 1856, as stated by Mr. Blue, the building was "a plain, unpretending structure," with an open or recess effect in the northeast end, and with a low tower above. During the ministry of Dr. Wadsworth, 1871-74, the church was remodeled. The recess referred to was closed, the front entrance altered, and the present tall steeple was substituted for the tower. Later the basement was excavated, enlarged and put in order for a Sunday School room. During the ministry of Dr. J. O. Andrew, 1883-86, a new organ was installed, which served until the present enlargement of the church in 1906. During the ministry of Dr. John A. Rice, 1903-06, the church was remodeled and enlarged by the addition of the Lomax Annex on the rear of the building. This annex is so designed as to harmonize with the main structure. It is used for the Sunday School, and is admirably adapted for that purpose. A large part of the money necessary to the erection of this addition came as a memorial gift from the late Mrs. Caroline A. Lomax, and it bears her name and that of her gifted and lamented son, Tennent Lomax. During the ministry of Dr. O. C. McGehee the auditorium has been remodeled and handsomely frescoed.

The membership of the church, as reported to the 1907 session of the annual conference, was 935.

The following is a list of the pastors, from 1830 to date:

- Rev. Benj. A. Haughton, 1830.
- Rev. Robert D. Smith, 1831.
- Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer, 1832.
- Rev. W. R. S. Mosley, 1833.
- Rev. Seymour B. Sawyer, 1834.
- Rev. Henry W. Hilliard, 1835.
- Rev. Robert A. Smith, 1836.
- Rev. H. A. G. Lee, 1837.
- Rev. Greenberry Garrett, 1838.
- Rev. Wiley W. Thomas, 1839.
- Rev. Thomas H. Capers, 1840.
- Rev. Samuel Armstrong, 1841.
- Rev. Lovick Pierce, 1842.
- Rev. Wm. B. Neal, 1843.
- Rev. Stephen F. Pilley, 1844.
- Rev. Jefferson Hamilton, 1845 and 1846.
- Rev. John C. Keener, 1847.
- Rev. Wm. H. Milburn, 1848 and 1849.
- Rev. Joshua T. Heard, 1850 and 1851.
- Rev. Christopher D. Oliver, 1852 and 1853.
- Rev. Oliver R. Blue, 1854 and 1855.



Rev. Thomas W. Dorman, 1856 and 1857.  
 Rev. Archelaus Mitchell, 1858 and 1859.  
 Rev. James A. Heard, 1860 and 1861.  
 Rev. Edwin Baldwin, 1862 and 1863.  
 Rev. Holland N. McTyeire, 1864-1866.  
 Rev. John Matthews, 1867-1870.  
 Rev. Edward Wadsworth, 1871-1874.  
 Rev. Allen S. Andrews, 1875-1878.  
 Rev. Mark Andrews, 1879-1882.  
 Rev. J. O. Andrew, 1883-1886.  
 Rev. Henry D. Moore, 1887-1890.  
 Rev. J. W. Rush, 1891-1894.  
 Rev. W. P. Dickinson, 1895-1898.  
 Rev. A. J. Lamar, 1899-1902.  
 Rev. J. A. Rice, 1903-1906.  
 Rev. Oliver C. McGehee, 1907, 1908.

### HERRON STREET CHURCH

This church is no longer in existence. The following brief sketch, condensed from Blue's *Churches of Montgomery* (1878), pp. 54-57, is given in order to complete, as far as possible, the record of Methodist Church effort in the city:

"In 1858 several members of the First Methodist Episcopal Church, impressed with the importance of increased efforts to extend the Redeemer's kingdom, inaugurated a new system of religious work for this city. It was known to them that there were portions of our city where but few persons attended public worship. Resolved to hunt them up and bring the means of grace to their doors, they went out two by two, establishing prayer meetings wherever they thought they could do good. They were encouraged in their labors, and continued their appointments.

"At the meeting of the Alabama Conference, held in December, 1859, the Rev. Charles S. Hurt was appointed to a mission work in Montgomery. This pious, devoted missionary labored faithfully and zealously in his Master's vineyard during the year 1860. He preached in a rented house on Clay Street, where, on opening the doors of the church for the first time, two persons were received, to-wit: Mrs. Jane Johnson, by letter from the First Methodist Episcopal Church, South, of this city, and her daughter-in-law, Mrs. Harriet McDuffie, on probation. Several other members were added during that year, by letter and on probation, so that the Rev. Mr. Hurt left the mission in a promising condition. . . . .

"He was succeeded in the mission by the Rev. B. B. Crawford, a young and earnest herald of the truth, thoroughly imbued with the spirit of Christ and with zeal for the salvation of souls. . . . .

"In 1861 the mission was placed in charge of the Rev. S. S. Sykes, a local preacher of this city, and a native of this county. Few preachers have labored more earnestly and faithfully on any station or circuit. His four consecutive years in this field were productive of much good during his life, and the fruits continued to be manifested after his death. . . . . He succeeded in securing a lot and the erection of (a) neat church edifice at the corner of Herron and Hanrick Streets. Col. James R. Powell, at present (1878) a citizen of Birmingham, was the liberal donor of the church lot. When the church edifice was first opened, March 20th, 1863, (a) preamble and resolutions were unanimously adopted (expressive of the appreciation of the church.)

"Rev. J. W. Jordan, who had been in charge of the colored Methodist Church of this city, was sent by the Alabama Conference in 1866, to the Herron Street Church. Here, he labored with varied success, during that and the succeeding year. The successors in 1868, 1869 and 1870, of the last mentioned, were the Revs. J. M. Ledbetter, M. J. Law and A. S. Douglas, all pious, devoted pastors, whose labors were blessed by the great Head of the Church.

"During 1871 this church was under the pastoral charge of the Rev. T. C. M. Golland. He was an educated, cultivated Englishman, who had been reared in the Episcopal Church, and in which he had been an ordained minister. . . . . He was succeeded by the Rev. Isaac Z. T. Morris, who was earnestly devoted to the best interests of his charge. The Rev. Mr. Lightfoot was his successor, who labored faithfully, but with indifferent success. The next pastor was the Rev. T. K. Armstrong. . . . . The last pastor was Rev. Joseph Curry, who remained only a short period in 1875. The poverty of the congregation and other causes rendered it evident that an efficient support would not be guaranteed to a regular minister by this church. Consequently, the membership was transferred to the Court Street M. E. Church, and since 1875 the Herron Street Church has been only a mission. The pulpit continues (1878) to be supplied by the Revs. T. K. Armstrong and E. G. Price."

## DEXTER AVENUE CHURCH

By ADOLPH ROEMER

The initial movements resulting in the organization of Dexter Avenue Church are best told in the terse language of Dr. Henry D. Moore. He says:

"In December, 1886, I was appointed preacher in charge of Court Street Church. Up to that time, though much had been said about the organization of a second church in the city, and though there was a desire on the part of many to have the movement started, yet nothing had really been done. In speaking to me of my appointment, Bishop Keener expressed the hope that I would begin, at once, to press the necessity of a new church upon the consideration of the Court Street membership. In the spring of 1887 to test the feeling of the laymen of the city on the subject I invited some thirty or thirty-five of them to meet me at the parsonage that there might be a full discussion of the matter."

As a result of this conference it was decided to proceed at once with the purchase of a lot. The committee appointed determined to buy on Dexter Avenue, but the title to the lot offered proved defective, and the matter did not go further at the time. Before leaving for Conference, Dr. Moore counseled with a few of the brethren of Court Street Church, and determined to ask for the appointment of a preacher for the proposed new charge.

Bishop J. C. Keener, who presided at the session of the Alabama Conference, in Greensboro, December, 1887, looked with favor on the plans, and announced the appointment of Rev. J. P. Roberts, for "Dexter Avenue Church." The Board of Missions appropriated one thousand dollars for his support. There was as yet no preaching place, and no place for the preacher to live. Soon after the beginning of the conference year Mr. Lawall, the owner of the lot originally in view, unexpectedly offered it again, and the titles having been cleared up, a purchase was effected at a cost of \$5,700.00, \$2,500.00 in cash and balance on one and two year notes. The lot was 100x125 feet, on the corner of Dexter Avenue and Bainbridge Street. On the corner was an old store, with two rooms in the rear, formerly occupied by Dotzheim grocery store and saloon. Next to the store was a five room cottage, into which Brother Roberts moved his family as a parsonage. The first prayer meeting was held on the last Tuesday night in January, 1888, at which we had candle lights. At the close of the service Mrs. Lakin and Mrs. Gayle took up a collection to buy lamps. I then gave my

first fifty cents to the church. I remember the following people were at this service, Mr. Phil Gayle, Mr. and Mrs. Lakin, Mrs. Henry, Mr. Dawson, Mrs. Curbow and daughter, Mr. and Mrs. Turrentine, Mr. and Mrs. C. E. Owen, my mother and myself. Brother Roberts preached his first sermon on the first Sunday in February, 1888, with a membership of twelve. During the months of January and February a committee of ladies composed of Mrs. J. A. Devore, Mrs. J. F. Turrentine, Miss Julia Key, Miss Florence Noble, Mrs. C. M. Roemer and Mrs. W. F. Vandiver raised money to furnish the parsonage. At the first quarterly conference held at the parsonage in February the following was elected a board of stewards, J. T. Key, J. F. Turrentine, Frank Utter, W. A. DeVore and A. Roemer. J. T. Key was the first superintendent of the Sunday School, J. F. Turrentine, secretary, and A. Roemer, librarian. At the close of the first year the membership had grown to eighty-two names, about four of whom were lost, leaving a net membership of seventy-eight. Mrs. C. M. Roemer gave the church a nice cabinet organ.

At the session of the Alabama Conference in Mobile, December, 1888, Rev. H. D. Moore was placed as preacher in charge of the Court Street Church and Dexter Avenue Church, with Rev. George M. Sellers as junior preacher. The Dexter Avenue stewards who represented a membership of seventy-eight met, and placed the junior preacher's salary at \$500.00. During the year we paid Brother Sellers \$540, and paid our prorata share of the Conference collections. At the close of the Conference year our membership had increased to one hundred and forty. Very little was done this year as to a church building. During the year, we licensed Bro. J. L. Morrell, an evangelist, Sunday, June 9, 1889. We also organized a Y. M. Aid and Missionary Society. At the annual Conference of 1889, Rev. J. B. Cumming was appointed to the Dexter Avenue charge. Brother Cumming was pastor for four years, or until Conference of 1893. The board of stewards representing a membership of only one hundred and forty members assessed the preacher's salary at \$1,000.00. Prof. Palmer, State superintendent of education, was chairman of the board. The crisis was upon the faithful few; for we either had to go forward or fail, and the assistance of Dr. LeGrand, Messrs. Vandiver, Teague and few others from Court Street Church and a committee from Dexter Avenue met at the former, and organized a building committee, consisting of Dr. M. LeGrand as chairman, W. F. Vandiver vice-chairman, M. M. Sweatt, secretary, and A. T. Hannon, treasurer, and C. G. Zirkle,

W. E. Sistrunk and A. Roemer. During the summer of 1890 Brother Cumming built the tabernacle where the residence of the late Benj. Screws now stands. After completing the tabernacle a collection was taken and every dollar of indebtedness was paid off, and on Thursday, January 22, 1891, the board of stewards gave a reception there to the members of the church. The first big collection was taken on Sunday, May 1, 1892, when a mass meeting was held at Court Street Church, the address being made by Dr. H. C. Morrison, of Atlanta, Ga., our General Missionary Secretary.

The fourth pastor was Rev. G. M. Roper, appointed at the Conference of 1893. He served until the summer of 1895, one year and five months, when he died, May 30, 1895. Rev. T. K. Roberts, better known as "Brother Tom," was appointed to fill out the unexpired term of Brother Roper. The lot where the tabernacle stood was sold to W. N. Cox and the members worshiped in the court house for several months. Our motto at this time was "All at it and always at it." Our aim was to put the roof on our Sunday School room of the present church building, so the services could be held there. On Thursday, November 28, 1895, a thanksgiving service was held at the court house. Rev. T. K. Roberts preached a sermon that was the wonder of all who heard it. A most profound impression was created, strange, unusual and thrilling scenes were enacted, men and women willingly parted with their money and jewels in order that the new building might be pushed forward to completion. At this service, a thanksgiving hymn composed by Bro. Crawford T. Ruff was read, and a song "The roof is going on," also composed by him, was sung. At this service the Sunday School raised \$141.33, the Ladies' Aid Society \$100.00, and the mite boxes \$161.35. The Corner Stone by Ruff and Roemer \$50.00, a friend through Brother Ruff \$50.00, making a total in cash of \$505.68. Special offering of Geo. Smith, W. N. Cox, Jones and Mosely, \$150.00. In a few months we were worshipping in our Sunday School room, singing another song composed by Brother Ruff, "The roof is safely on."

The Dexter Avenue Sunday School through a committee secured the privilege of using the school building of Miss Neville for a Sunday School at Highland Park, and on Sunday, October 22, 1895, a school was organized with an enrollment of thirty-three by Brother Roberts. Mr. J. B. Worthington was appointed superintendent. The Conference in December, 1895, returned Bro. T. K. Roberts for 1896.

The Conference of 1896 sent us Rev. C. A. Rush. He



served Dexter Avenue four years. We did not raise a great deal of money for the church building during Brother Rush's administration, but we gained largely in membership.

The Conference of 1900 sent us Rev. A. L. Andrews, who remained with us three years, until December, 1903. The annual Conference met in Dexter Avenue Church during the administration of Brother Andrews. About \$15,000 was raised for the church building debt mostly by the Powell bond system. During the pastorate of Brother Andrews the present parsonage was willed to the church by Mrs. Hooker, a member of the church. This excellent gift was brought about through the efforts of C. G. Zirkle. At the Conference in December, 1903, Rev. Dr. J. W. Shoaff was appointed pastor of Dexter Avenue. He served one year.

The Conference of 1904 sent us our present pastor, Rev. W. M. Cox. During the three years that Brother Cox has been with us the membership has increased, and the church debt has been greatly reduced. All the members of Dexter Avenue trust that before the Conference year of 1908 closes the church will have been dedicated.

The following stewards have died in service, Bros. Sims, Bradford, Hudson and Hartley.

The superintendents who have served the Sunday School since the school has been organized, are T. J. Key, J. F. Turrentine, C. T. Ruff, M. M. Sweatt, W. L. Hudson, A. Roemer, F. C. Baugh, and W. F. Feagin.

The present church building was constructed by the following: Architect, Mr. McGrath; contractor for brick work, J. B. Worthington; carpenter's work, Cook & Laurie and D. F. Gorrie; stone work, Curbow & Clapp Marble Co.; and painting, D. C. Bray.

At the annual conference in December, 1907, the membership of the church was 532.

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## CLAYTON STREET CHURCH

By REV. D. H. MCNEAL

In December, 1889, a mission for Montgomery was announced in the Conference appointments, and Rev. Mr. Howell, a local preacher, was placed in charge. His principal work was in connection with Bethel Church in the West End neighborhood. He also held services at two other places in the city. One of these was in the southwest part of Montgomery. Here he had a good Sunday

School, here he preached and held prayer-meetings, assisted faithfully by that good man, Rev. R. M. Barry.

Of these early days, Rev. E. A. Dannelly writes: "A Sunday School had been organized in a small store-room on Holt Street and it progressed greatly under the leadership of Brother Boaz Duncan, assisted by a few earnest and faithful teachers from Court Street Church." Owing to the demand of the landlord for increase of rent, the Sunday School disbanded. After a short time, however, Dr. J. W. Rush, then pastor of Court Street Church, purchased, on his own responsibility, a small house, 20x30 feet in size, on Herron near Holt Street. This was located within half a block from the old store-room.

At the Conference held in Eufaula, in December, 1892, the "Montgomery City Mission" was announced, and Rev. E. A. Dannelly was appointed preacher in charge. Brother Dannelly remained with the church for three years, and the development of the charge is best told in his own language. He says, in the *Corner Stone*, January, 1896:

"I began preaching at Holt Street Church (or rather the little shanty), on the first Sunday in January, 1893. About twenty-five people were present; most of these were members of Court Street Church.

"With the assistance of Dr. Rush, I went from house to house and on the third Sunday in January, we were able to organize a church. I give the names of this 'honor roll' for such it was indeed: Miss Mittie Goin, Mrs. J. House, Mrs. Texas Morrill (now deceased), Miss Ada Renau (now Mrs. N. F. Goodson), F. B. Tanner, Mr. and Mrs. W. S. West.

"On the following Sunday about ten other persons joined us. Nearly all of these came from Court Street Church. Let me say right here, that Dr. Rush went with me to see all his members in the neighborhood of the church, and he urged all of them to unite with us in our new church organization.

"On the fourth Sunday night, two persons joined on profession of faith, and that fruit caused the young preacher to 'thank God and take courage.' Those persons were Mr. and Mrs. S. B. Goin, and they are now among the most faithful of the flock.

"The work from this time prospered. It was not long before the need of more room to accommodate the Sunday School and congregation, was necessary.

"We conferred with Dr. Rush and then held a church conference with the little band, and we resolved to enlarge the house. Not a dollar was in sight, but each one pledged his or her all to meet the cost of enlarging. On

this assurance, Dr. Rush and I made a \$500 contract for enlarging and finishing the house. We did not know where the funds were to come from, but we trusted in 'Him who is faithful.' The ladies went to work in earnest, all gave of their means and by the time the work was half done, we had about \$175. Then Dr. Rush and I secured a loan of \$300 from Dr. Mangum, treasurer of the Preachers' Aid Society. The enlargement gave us a nicely finished house and a seating capacity of one hundred and eighty.

"By the close of the year, we had about one hundred members and paid every cent of the \$300 borrowed on improvements. Besides this, the church supplemented the missionary appropriation for the preacher's support, making his salary ample. Then, too, without any assessment by the district steward, a nice sum was raised 'on the collections.'

"During the next year, 1894, the church continued to increase in numbers so much, that it was necessary to enlarge the church again. This was done and paid for with little trouble. About 200 members were reported at conference."

In 1895, Rev. C. P. Atkinson was appointed to succeed Brother Dannelly. He served for 1896, and was succeeded by Rev. W. S. Street, who served for 1897 and 1898. At the conference of December, 1898, Rev. M. H. Holt, now presiding elder of the Montgomery District, was appointed. He served four years. During the ministry of Brother Street it was decided to leave the Holt Street location, and the present lot, corner of Clayton Street and Clayton Park, was secured. Plans for the erection of the church building were adopted, and in 1898 the work was begun. The church building was completed about October 1, 1899, the first year of Brother Holt's pastorate, and the first sermon in the new church building was preached by him on the second Sunday in October following. The church building cost approximately \$4,500.00.

The membership of the church, as reported to the annual Conference in December, 1907, was 418.

The several pastors, with their terms, are as follows:

Rev. E. A. Dannelly, 1893-1895; Rev. C. P. Atkinson, 1896; Rev. W. S. Street, 1897-1898; Rev. M. H. Holt, 1899-1902; Rev. J. T. Mangum, 1903; Rev. E. C. Moore, 1904-1906; Rev. J. H. Holloway, 1907; Rev. D. H. McNeal, 1908, present pastor.

## PERRY STREET CHURCH

By REV. WILLIAM MARVIN CURTIS

Perry Street Methodist Church, located at the corner of Perry Street and Noble Avenue, as it now stands, represents an outlay of about \$7000.00, this amount including the purchase price of the building lots. It was finished the latter part of December, 1900, and the first sermon was preached therein on the first Sunday in January, 1901, by Rev. S. M. Hosmer, D. D., president of the Southern University. The building committee was composed of the following, viz: Fred S. Ball, *chairman*, W. B. Howard, treasurer, J. D. Whatley and F. M. Mosely.

The church, however, represents an outgrowth and a combination of forces. Beginning with a union Sunday School in 1887, and passing into the hands of the Methodists in 1893, the McDonough Street Church was favored with its first pastor, Rev. J. M. Glenn, in December, 1893. The Goode Street Church, which also began as a Sunday School came into the hands of the Methodists, and received its first pastor, Rev. E. A. Dannelly, in December, 1892. Brother Dannelly served Goode Street two years.

Brother Glenn served McDonough Street only a few months, and gave it up owing to the failure of his health, and his year was filled out by Rev. G. M. Roper, pastor of the Dexter Avenue Church, who preached on Sunday afternoon, and attended to the pastoral work.

In December, 1894, Rev. W. K. Dennis was sent as pastor to the McDonough Street and the Goode Street charges, and served until July, 1896, when he transferred to the Kentucky conference. The year was filled out by Dr. J. O. Andrew, editor of the *Alabama Christian Advocate*. During Brother Dennis's pastorate the church building was moved from McDonough Street to Hull Street.

In December, 1896, Rev. E. L. Crawford was sent to the work and remained four years. At the close of his first year McDonough and Goode Streets united, and shortly thereafter the name was changed to the Hull Street Methodist Church.

During his last year Perry Street Church was built and finished as it now stands. The time limit removed him in December, 1900, and the congregation moved into the new building on the first Sunday in January, 1901. Rev. B. F. Marshall, the newly appointed pastor, failed to arrive by this date, and hence it came about that the

first sermon was preached in the present Perry Street Church by Dr. Hosmer, as above stated.

No account of Perry Street Church would be complete which did not mention the fact that Dr. J. W. Rush was the pastor of Court Street Church when the McDonough Street and Goode Street Sunday Schools came under the control of the Methodists, and became preaching appointments. Our suburban churches stand today as a monument to the memory of one whose heart was great, whose confidence was unflinching, and whose head was filled with the riches of wisdom. The message of Dr. Rush to the Methodists who lived in McDonough Street district was—unite with the struggling church near you and make yourself useful and a blessing where you will count something. May this message sink into the hearts of those who today can be a blessing to the suburban churches.

The membership of the church, as reported to the annual Conference, December, 1907, was 222.

The pastors since 1900, and their terms of service are as follows, viz:

Rev. B. F. Marshall, 1900-1901; Rev. J. H. James, 1901-1903; Rev. B. L. Moore, 1903-1905; Rev. H. Trawick, 1905-1906; Rev. I. W. Chalker, 1906-1907; and Rev. W. M. Curtis, 1908, the present pastor.

## FIFTH AVENUE CHURCH

By REV. P. M. GUTHRIE

In the *Corner Stone* for December, 1895, Dr. Henry Dannelly Moore, in an account of the development of our suburban churches, gives the following brief sketch of the beginning of church effort in the western part of the city:

"After getting this enterprise on foot (Dexter Avenue Church), I felt that there were other sections of the city demanding attention. The first receiving our care, because it was the most needy was in the neighborhood of the cotton mill. A Sunday School was organized in a little 'upper room,' and Brother Wardlaw and myself preached there to the congregation, mainly of operatives in the cotton mill. Through the generosity of Col. Nelson, Bethel Church was built, and before it was completed he offered to have titles made to the M. E. Church, South, if I could secure \$300.00 from our Conference Board of Church Extension. The board did not see its way clear to make the donation. Nevertheless, I dedicated the



church, and the company gave us the exclusive use of the house.

"In December, 1889, I urged the establishment of a city mission, and among the appointments of that year will be found 'Bethel and City Mission.' Brother Howell, a noble local preacher, was put in charge."

From the appointment of Rev. E. A. Dannelly in 1892 to the "Montgomery City Mission" (later to become Holt Street, and then Clayton Street Church), West End was served by him, 1893-1895, and by his successors, Rev. C. P. Atkinson, 1896, and Rev. W. S. Street, 1897-1898. On January 1, 1899, the church was made a separate station, and its pastors from that time to the present have been: Dr. J. O. Andrew, 1899; Rev. E. C. Maye, 1900-1903; Rev. J. W. Rhinehart, 1904-1907; and Rev. P. M. Guthrie, 1908, present pastor.

During the pastorate of Brother Maye, the location of the church was moved from the cotton mill to Fifth Avenue, its present location. The first quarterly conference was held March 13, 1899, with Dr. J. M. Mason as presiding elder. The church building is valued at \$1,700.00.

The records of the Conference of 1907 show a membership of 370.

## FOREST AVENUE CHURCH

By REV. ROBERT ROSS ELLISON

Forest Avenue Church is the youngest of Montgomery Methodist Churches. The number of Methodist families residing in the Highland Park district of the city had for some time emphasized the importance of the organization of a congregation nearer to them than the down town churches, but it was not until a quarterly conference of the Dexter Avenue Methodist Church, held in January, 1903, that it was definitely decided to undertake the work. This quarterly conference was held in the pastor's study, an "upper room" of the church, and Dr. J. S. Frazer, the presiding elder of the Montgomery district, presided. After formally inaugurating the movement, other necessary preliminaries were settled and work was begun in earnest. A building committee was named, consisting of R. E. Steiner, *chairman*, Adolph Roemer, Charles G. Zirkle, W. M. Teague, Jr., and Samuel C. Starke.

For a location, lots 15 and 16, block C, section 6 (Highland Park), were secured. The value of these lots was

\$600.00. Ground for the building was broken May 1, 1903. It was completed June 27, 1903, at a cost of \$2,307.00. The contractor was C. Y. Bogacki.

In the meantime the congregation had been organized; and the Rev. Frank Seay was appointed first pastor in April, 1903. On June 28, 1903, the first sermon was preached in the new building by Dr. J. S. Frazer, who had taken such a deep interest in the welfare of the new church. The pastor was present. The first quarterly conference was held July 1, 1903, with Dr. Frazer presiding.

From the beginning the church has experienced a lively growth, and its membership as reported to the last annual conference, December, 1907, was 312.

On December 12, 1905, R. R. Ellison, the present pastor, was appointed to Forest Avenue.









